

THE NATIONAL THEATRE SCHOOL OF CANADA PRESENTS
MIDDLETOWN

Presented by



WRITTEN BY
Will Eno

DIRECTED BY
Jessica Carmichael

February 28 to March 4, 2023

Studio Hydro-Québec
at the Monument-National



NATIONAL
THEATRE
SCHOOL
OF CANADA

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

February 12, 2023

“Theatre, in a grown up and brave way, just seems drenched with death, and drenched with humanness—which has death as a component.”-playwright Will Eno

“I am having trouble today...Where are you?” -poet Prageeta Sharma, from Grief Sequence

“Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it? Every, every minute? No. Saints and Poets maybe, they do some.” -Thornton Wilder’s Our Town

“I’ll sing to you until you sing back” Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, from This Accident of Being Lost

As the work on Middletown- with the great students of the National Theatre School of Canada- enters the time where we draw our delicate work through the eye of a needle, I remain struck by the ways this play gathers us around the notion of grappling with one of its essential questions: why do we bother?

“It’s weird to be alive”, says the Mechanic while connecting on the shared way we all come into this world. There is so much in the afterwards, the middle, the breathing, that compels and shatters. It is weird...what we are all journeying towards... “people know what happens”

Being in the middle myself, grappling with some shattering personal events these last few years, I too, wonder on what I want most out of life and how to hold on as time, space, the unknown confronts me. The Mechanic seems to hold a desired answer: *“to calmly know love on Earth. And to feel beautiful.”* But how do we continue to live together and find love and beauty in a world full of such things as violence, racism and colonial trauma? While statistics regarding the stigmas towards mental health continue to affect many diverse individuals and communities disproportionately? While minimal aid reaches victims of Earthquakes in Syria and Turkey? While different parts of the world grapple with education bans, gender equality, repercussions of climate change, denial of it, limited access to food and clean water, poverty, wars and conflict, human rights violations, displaced peoples, disarmament? In the face of this and more, how can any individual really see into another’s window to connect on a shared life experience? So much is different, is so much the same? *“You think you know a person.”* What can bring us together? Can we really have a shared experience of what it is to be human on earth? Can we connect?

Eno’s world offers an opportunity to grapple with some of these questions. To in fact, perhaps ask to keep grappling with what it means to live here together. To ask how can we continue to live together? To turn to your neighbor and ask: how do you live in this world? What are you seeing? Where did you come from? What have you lived? What has been important? What has been the worst? Best? Why? Where might you go? To question what seems to be and could be. What is and is not? What is in-between? The significance, the insignificance. The loneliness. To really ask someone and yourself: What do you want out of life? *“I think we’re born with questions. And the world is the answer.”* To ask and grapple with “why bother?” Now perhaps more than ever. Why do you bother?

Perhaps, in the continued theme of Grief that now confronts me in my work as a director, I too find that to love yes, to know love, is the answer.

I thank Will Eno for the conversation, for the re-writes and openness to dialogue on what this play might say today in 2023. For the gravity. The poetry. To the company for their fortitude, generosity, talents, great insights and bright hearts. To my daughter, my sister, my family, my ancestors, who continue to help me get up in the morning.

-Jessica Carmichael (Acting, 2003)

Constellation by Leanne Betasamosake Simpson

luck+ intent-a star person moving in
light_____ the unanswerable thoughts of great
mama= your first ocean

you're used to quiet words
& so am i
so i'll just whisper:

you're a treaty, a dish & a spoon
you're a prairie, a big river & the mouths of many rivers
you're a longhouse, a tiipie & a wiigwamin
you're corn, beans, squash & minomiin

you're buffalo & a bear amongst turtles

without conditions= that time we all prayed for your
heartbeat

home= the place where the healer lives

nine months= the shift from spirit into solid form

you're used to quiet words
& so am i
so i'll just whisper:

i'll stand at the foot of your lake
i'll wait in the grass while you take it too far
i'll give you the keys to all the canoes
i'll sing to you, until you sing back

i'll sing to you, until you sing back.

CAST



Calla Adubofour-Poku ^{A3}
(Unceded traditional territory of the
Saanich, Cowichan, Coast Salish
and Chemainus First Nations)
Tourist M/Ground Control/
Sweetheart / Cop Radio



Jasmine Case ^{A3}
(Markham, ON)
(Treaty 13 Territory, Mississaugas
of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the
Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and
the Wendat peoples)
Aunt/Doctor Julie/ Science
Radio 3



Emma Hennig ^{A3}
(St. Albert, AB)
(Treaty 6 Territory)
Meg/Attendant 1/Science
Radio 1



Jeremy Lewis ^{A3}
(Île-Perrot, QC)
(Tio'tia:ke, Unceded
Kanien'kehá:ka Land)
Librarian



Evan Mercer ^{A3}
(Shearstown, NL)
(Ktaqmkuk [the unceded, traditional
territory of the Beothuk and the
Mi'kmaq])
John Dodge



Eric Miracle ^{A3}
(Edmonton, AB)
(Treaty 6 Territory)
Public Speaker/ M on Date/
Landscape/Janitor/Intercom

CAST



Megan Murphy ^{A3}
(Fredericton, NB)
(unceded, traditional territory of
the Wolastoqiyik, Mi'kmaq and
Peskotomuhkati peoples)
Tourist F/Freelancer/Doctor
M/ Classic Radio



Alia Omar ^{A3}
(Etobicoke, ON)
(Treaty 13 Territory)
Tour Guide/W on Date/
Attendant 2/Science Radio 2



Madeleine Scovil ^{A3}
(Kingston, ON)
(Treaty 57 Territory)
Cop



Leanna Williams ^{A3}
(Regina, SK)
(Treaty 4 Territory)
Mary Swanson



Mackenzie Wojcik ^{A3}
(Winnipeg, MB)
(Treaty 1 Territory)
Mechanic

CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION TEAM

GRADUATING STUDENTS



Juliette Dubé-Tyler ^{SCD3}
(Montreal, QC)
(Tio'tia:ke, Unceded
Kanien'kehá:ka Land)
Set and Props Designer



Anthony Allan ^{PDTA3}
(Burlington, ON)
(Brant Tract Treaty Territory)
Technical Director



Charlotte Baker ^{PDTA3}
(Waterloo, ON)
(traditional territory of the Neutral,
Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee
peoples)
Sound Designer



Isabella Robert ^{PDTA3}
(Kitamat, BC)
(Unceded Haisla Territory)
Stage Manager



Caroline Nowacki ^{PDTA3}
(Montreal, QC)
(Tio'tia:ke, Unceded
Kanien'kehá:ka Land)
Production Manager



Jo Natale ^{PDTA3}
(Orangeville, ON)
(Treaty 18 Territory)
Video Designer



Tom Giroux ^{IR}
(Calgary, AB)
(Treaty 7 Territory)
Lighting Designer

CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION TEAM

PROFESSIONALS

Costume Designer

Margarita Brodie (Set and Costume Design, 2020)

STUDENTS

Assistant Director

Danik McAfee ^{D1}

Hair & Makeup Designer, Costume Assistant,
Head Dresser

Claire Aldridge ^{SCD2}

Assistant Technical Director

Matt Lalonde ^{PDTA2}

Assistant Stage Manager

Alex Sykes ^{PDTA1}

Head Carpenter

Alex Sinclair ^{PDTA2}

Head Electrician

Andrea McMillan ^{PDTA2}

Head of Video

May Nemat Allah ^{PDTA2}

Head of Sound

Matthew Lawler ^{PDTA2}

Set & Props Assistant

Pen Tsin ^{SCD2}

Production Assitant

Nezren Pittoors-McMahon ^{PDTA1}

Stage Carpenters **Alex Joyce** ^{PDTA1}, **Zoe Daca** ^{PDTA1}, **Eiden French** ^{PDTA1}, **Beatrice Freedman** ^{PDTA1}, **Nezren Pittoors-McMahon** ^{PDTA1}

Crew **Alex Joyce** ^{PDTA1}, **Zoe Daca** ^{PDTA1}, **Eiden French** ^{PDTA1}, **Nezren Pittoors-McMahon** ^{PDTA1}

Dressers **Hailee Jake Friesen** ^{SCD1}, **Jess Jandera** ^{SCD1}, **Augusta Lutynski** ^{SCD1}, **Nikki Mabias** ^{SCD1}

Costume Team **Jess Jandera** ^{SCD1}, **Nikki Mabias** ^{SCD1}

Paint Team **Lola Cordreaux** ^{SCD1}, **Émile Dumoulin** ^{SCD1}, **Hailee Jake Friesen** ^{SCD1}, **Jess Jandera** ^{SCD1}, **Nikki Mabias** ^{SCD1}

COACHES

Movement

Rebecca Harper

Voice

Lauren Maykut

Fight Director

Anita Nittoly

Set Design

Annick Lavallée-Benny

Hair

Stéphane Scotto Di Cesare

Makeup

Véronique St-Germain

Props

Angela Rassenti (Set and
Costume Design, 2008)

Lighting Design

Leigh Ann Vardy

Video Design

Cameron Davis

Sound Design

Richard Feren

Production Management

Andrea Lundy

Stage Management

Maria Popoff

Technical Direction

Autumn Coppaway

Scenic Painting

Véronique Pagnoux

Master Carpenter

Guillaume Simard (Création et
production, 2010)

Head Carpenter

Christian Larochelle

Technical Supervision

Marjorie Lefebvre

Head of Lighting

Francis Hamel (Création et
production, 2011)

Head of Sound

Bianca Bernier

Heads of Wardrobe

**Julia Metzger and Michael
Slack** (Set and Costume Design,
2001)

The land on which we are gathered has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst nations. It is part of the traditional unceded territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka, whose rich cultural heritage continues to teach us that respect, dialogue and peace are pillars of democratic governance.

The public performances of the National Theatre School's graduating class represent the culmination of years of training for many of Canada's future playwrights, actors, directors, designers, and production personnel. Everything seen on stage and all that goes on behind the scenes is created by the students under the guidance of professional guest artists. The National Theatre School of Canada is a school for the arts. It is the premier professional theatre training institution in the country. The School offers incomparable training in all theatre arts.

Alisa Palmer, Executive Artistic Director of the English Section
Frédéric Dubois, Executive Artistic Director of the French section
Fanny Pagé, CEO

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Théâtre Denise Pelletier
Écoscéno
Cirque Éloïze

UPCOMING SHOWS

SELECTIONS FROM 365 DAYS / 365 PLAYS

by **Suzan-Lori Parks**

Directed by
Rose Plotek

February 28 to March 3, 2023

Saint-Denis Campus

MATHILDE

by **Véronique Olmi**

Directed by
Evelyne Londei-Shortall

March 28 to April 1, 2023

Monument-National Campus

(show in French)

SMALL TALK

by **Carole Fréchette**

Directed by
Louis-Karl Tremblay

April 17 to 21, 2023

Former National Film Board

of Canada Complex

(show in French)

More information and full programming at ent-nts.ca

PARTNERS

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**TD READY
COMMITMENT**

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